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No. 60

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. DEGETTE).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

April 16, 2008.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DIANA DEGETTE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

Dr. Charles B. Simmons, Memorial Drive United Methodist Church, Houston, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Ever-present God: Humbly we pause to approach You. Help us to come before You in reverence that You may enter into our presence with power.

In this hallowed House, we thank You for these Your servants who now guard its great legislative inheritance and seek to profit the Nation by wise governance. Endow each with a right understanding, pure purposes and sound speech. Enable them to rise above all personal agendas and party zeal to the nobler concerns of the public good. Give them vision and set their hearts afire with large resolves.

Lord, lead them, that in all deliberations they may faithfully discharge the duties of their office and ever promote the health, safety and well-being of all whom they serve, for the good of the United States of America, the blessing of our world, and the glory of Your holy name. In His, we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the

last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING DR. CHARLES B. SIMMONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CULBERSON) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. CULBERSON. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It's my privilege to rise today to honor my pastor and my good friend, Dr. Charles B. Simmons, our chaplain for the day.

Dr. Simmons joins us from my hometown of Houston, Texas, and it is just a thrill to have him here today. Dr. Simmons baptized our daughter, Caroline. He has been our minister for many, many years at Memorial Drive United Methodist Church.

He is joined here today by his wife, Carol; his son, Christopher; and Christopher's wife, Melissa. We are thrilled to have them here. Dr. Simmons and his wife, Carol, also have a son, Jeffrey, who is not here with us today.

Dr. Simmons is serving in his 10th year as senior minister of Memorial Drive United Methodist Church. He is recognized nationally as a dynamic minister, a dedicated pastor and respected leader among Methodists. He

led the way at our church to reach out to the people of Louisiana who suffered as a result of the hurricane and helped rescue many, many lives and put many lives back on track after that devastating storm.

Dr. Simmons is a native of Louisiana, a graduate of Centenary College, who earned his master of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees from Emory University, and completed his further graduate study in Geneva, Switzerland, as a Methodist fellow. He has served in a variety of appointments, and his leadership has enriched the lives of our congregation and grown our church now to 7,000 members of Memorial Drive United Methodist Church.

We are very proud to have him here. His leadership has been instrumental in developing The Connection Center, an off-campus site serving as an outpost for ministry with state-of-the-art facilities for senior adult and youth programs. We have also founded, under Dr. Simmons' leadership, a third site at the former Shepherd Drive United Methodist Church which is now in operation as well.

Outside of our local congregation, Dr. Simmons also serves as chair of the Texas Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, a member of the Large Church Initiative Team, and is active in both the administrations of Centenary College and Emory University.

With deep appreciation for his leadership to Memorial Drive United Methodist Church, his devotion to its members and his beneficial efforts to the community at large, it is my privilege to welcome Dr. Simmons and his family to Washington. I am honored to have him here today as our guest chaplain.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain requests for up to

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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